



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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consideration of parents. He touches upon evils which we all deplore. The remedies he suggests rest upon sound educational principles. How far he is right in the minor details he suggests remains to be proved, but his main contention has been our own.

The Land o' the Leal, by D. Lyall (Hodder and Stoughton, 6/-). Scotland is inexhaustible. For a long time it was supposed apparently that the "Wizard of the North" had drained her resources, but lately we have had a great crop of Scotch stories by new men on new lines, and all interesting. The title is a little misleading. Scotland is intended for the *The Land o' the Leal*, and here we have a number of very pleasant stories of village life, tales of people who have their own charm, though they are not cast in the heroic mould of the folk of Drumtochty.

Ireland, the Children's Study Series, by O'Brien (Fisher Unwin, 2/6). "I drew down upon myself their surprise, nay, almost contempt, when I first came among them, when I confessed I had never heard of Dungannon Castle and Hugh O'Neil"—"they" being Irish children, shocked at the ignorance of an English governess. Mr. Barry O'Brien has done much to remedy this pretty general ignorance on the subject of Irish history. He has given us a well-written, well-conceived sketch on the plan of grouping the facts of a period, as far as possible, around some central figure. The strain of the relations of England with the "distressful country" is pretty evident throughout, but the little volume is fairly and brightly written, and should be used in the education of English, as well as of Irish children.

Moab, Ammon, and Gilead, by A. H. Percy (Simpkin & Marshall, 6/-). The dedication of this volume is worth pondering. "To my loving Mother, to whom I owe all my early instruction in the Bible." We wonder have young people of the present day the same keen interest in Bible lands with which an earlier generation grew up? To those who have, Mr. Percy's volume with its capital maps and photographs, clear descriptions, and bright narrative, will be a treasure trove.

Cranford, by Mrs. Gaskell (Bliss, Sands & Co.) Messrs. Bliss, Sands and Co. have given us a great treat in this edition of *Cranford*, with pictures worthy of the best days of book illustration. Mr. T. H. Robinson has caught the feeling of Cranford; Mr. Mulliner carrying light refreshments, Carlo begging, Captain Brown and Miss Betty Barker's cow, Martha staring at the East Indian, Peter among the ladies—everyone is a gem, almost worthy of Cruickshank. The edition is very pretty with good readable type, well spaced, and as for the story itself, if anyone does not know Cranford, that person is to be envied—he has a delight in store. It is a pity that the misprint, loin for lion, should have been repeated; a pretty little touch is lost.

Good Reading about Books, mostly by their Authors (Fisher Unwin). Mr. Fisher Unwin has improved upon his volume of last year. The good reading seems even better, there is more of it and the get-up of the little book is improved. The portraits of the authors is an interesting feature. We think Mr. Unwin's new departure should be followed by other publishers. Let the reviewers say their say in the press and the authors themselves tell us about their books in their publisher's annual.

We have received from the Religious Tract Society—

The Boy's Own Annual for 1896 (8/-), with the usual wealth of illustrations and wonderful variety of matter. The Boy's Own Paper has especially attractive diagrams and instructions for a boy-carpenter, a beautifully coloured sheet of British butterflies, and capital stories.

The Girl's Own Annual, 1896 (8/-), has charming studies of plant life by Mrs. Brightwen, a capital and very useful tale for girls by Mrs. Everett-Green, and some really beautiful illustrations, the Market Place, Wells, being among the best. The *Girl's Own Annual* seems to us to have outdone itself this year.

The Child's Companion and *Our Little Dots* are both charming for the ages of their respective readers. *Our Little Dots* should be a great favourite in the nursery.

Teddy's Button (1/-) is a charming story of a little laddie whose incentive to all courage and goodness was a button on his jacket, the only relic of his soldier father.

The Luor of Fame, by Clive Holland (Bellairs & Co., 3/6). A simply told story full of graphic pictures of Norwegian life and scenery. The teaching is sound and wholesome, if possibly a little severe.

A Mystery of the Cordilleras, by A. M. Bourne (Bellairs & Co., 3/6). A well-told tale with capital pictures.

OUR WORK.

Natural History Club.—The Exhibition was held on November 20th and 21st, at 50, Porchester Terrace (by kind permission of E. A. Franklin, Esq.), and proved a great success. There were a great number of exhibits, including collections of shells, dried flowers, ferns, fossils, feathers, &c., brush drawings, and other objects of interest. The Annual Report (price 4d.) will be issued in January. The committee have decided, for next year, to discontinue the *Geology* course, and to substitute for the course—*Lessons from our Walks*—a series of letters, entitled: "*Natural History Lessons in House, Garden, and Field*." The *Junior Botany* course will be continued. The amount of annual subscription for this and the new Natural History course will be 10/-. The matter comprised in each letter will, in future, be condensed into a smaller space, while the lessons will be amplified by the use of a reading book. Courses of letters already issued may also be had at the same reduced fee. Apply to the Secretary, P.N.E.U., 28, Victoria Street.

House of Education.—We begin work January 16th. We already feel the great value of the second year's training. The students go to their posts with more power and purpose than ever.

Parents' Review School.—We gather that the last year's work in the *Parents' Review School* has been extremely satisfactory. Parents should recognise that the questions are set, not only to find out what the children know, but to shew the lines on which the teaching should be carried on. One lady thinks it not fair to ask what children have observed about spiders, because not every child has the gift or the

opportunity to observe "insects." Now the value of that question to such a child is that he will observe the creatures that are the subjects of study for next term.

Errata—*Parents' Review* School Programmes. Recitations, Class II. Instead of *Boadicea* and *John Gilpin* take *Hartleap Well* and *The Battle of Blenheim*. Bible lessons, Class III. In the Gospel History take §§ *Jesus, Son of God* to *Jesus Baptised*.

Mothers' Educational Course.—Will the mothers who are doing this course make it their duty to hand on the knowledge they get, as they get it, to mothers of the artisan class, whether in the way of asking a few mothers to tea and chat, or in talk with a single mother in the course of cottage visits, or in Mothers' meetings; anyway, will they make "pass on" their watchword for the coming year.

THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.]

DEAR EDITOR,—

"P-rospcr Thou their labour,
N-ighbour helping neighbour,
E-ach working for the other's good,
U-niversal motherhood."

This is a present to you, sent to me by a dear old lady of 83, who found it quite easy to understand what the P.N.E.U. is. Would you also like this story?—Elder sister sitting in window-seat of dining-room to catch last light—dinner table nearly laid—door softly opens—curly head peeps in—then, not seeing sister, a white night-shirt comes in, goes to table, abstracts a peach—disappears—sister sore-hurt, horrified, and doubtful, sat thinking—door opens again—re-enter white night-shirt and bare feet, which go again to table—replace peach—then looks over shoulder in act of departing, and says distinctly and emphatically:—"Sold again, old Devil"—disappears. That child had brothers!!
E. B.

DEAR EDITOR,—I see in our *Parents' Review* for this month a suggestion of "The Translation and English Literature Societies." I wonder if you would advise me if it would be possible to work one here as a sort of class? There are a number of girls here, nice and good girls, of the class of superior farmer, well-educated for their station, but with no culture. I want so much to open out for them a wider view of life, if I can do so in any humble way. Would it, you think, be work too far above them that Mr. Rooper would expect? My idea was to have them as a class once a week or fortnight, and read together and discuss the subject given us; read, perhaps, the essays in the rough, and helping each other. They would be too shy and strange to the work to do it individually,

* This might be a valuable suggestion in other neighbourhoods.

and I thought perhaps Mr. Rooper might accept us as a *Class*, giving his criticism individually. Of course we would pay our 1/6 fee each. But I do not want to frighten them, and think the suggestion of a class would be less alarming than working for themselves. I think the "Literature" would, probably, be most suitable, and perhaps we could be gently dealt with as to subjects given us till we gain a little confidence. The "Translation" would be no use, I think, as I doubt if any of them know any foreign language to translate, except a feeble smattering of French. Will you be so good as to advise me about this idea?

Yours very truly, F. W.

DEAR EDITOR,—The greatest obstacle to Rational Educational Reform, says Dr. J. M. Rice, in the *Forum*, is not the indifference of parents, but the want of agreement amongst teachers as to the changes, if any, in our present system which it could be desirable to adopt. This arises, the writer thinks, from the fact that whilst all broadening of the curriculum must depend upon the amount of time that can be spared after the necessary educational tools, the "three R's," and the like, have been satisfactorily acquired; there is no clear definition of what is meant by the term "satisfaction," nor any standard by which it may be determined how much time it is necessary to devote to a subject to ensure the attainment of this amount of proficiency. To settle these points and so clear the way for further advance, Dr. Rice has spent two years in visiting schools in many parts of the States, in the course of which he has examined something like 100,000 children in spelling, penmanship, English composition, and arithmetic, to discover, first, what our children might reasonably be expected to accomplish, and second, to arrive at some definite conclusion concerning the comparative economy of different methods of teaching. The result of this investigation will appear in a series of papers in the *Forum*, which will be awaited with much interest; and the thanks of educational students are due to the spirited support of this magazine which has rendered these investigations possible.

"Drawbacks of a College Education," is the rather startling title of a paper by President Thwing in the same number of the *Forum*. First, in the author's opinion, the college may injure men through fixing the habit of loving and doing only that which is agreeable. The college may minister to laziness, "refined dilettanteism." (2) A college education trains the judgment of the student at the expense of his energy. (3) The time spent in getting it removes a man destined for a commercial life from the most favourable opportunities for learning business. (4) It fills the mind with useless knowledge and trains it in antiquated methods of thought and action. (5) It trains individuality but not social efficiency, and, (6) finally "for the man who takes no interest in any one of the manifold concerns of a college—scholastic, fraternal, social, athletic—the college is a distinct and positive injury." It is only right to add that the latter part of Professor Thwing's paper contains a fairly complete answer to most of these objections.

Dec. 14th, 1896.

PATER JUNIOR.